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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/821,952	04/12/2004	Philip James Ions	T2211-9059US01	2378

181 7590 10/31/2005

MITES & STOCKBRIDGE PC
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SUITE 500
MCLEAN, VA 22102-3833

EXAMINER

KASTLER, SCOTT R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 10/31/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/821,952

Applicant(s)

IONS ET AL.

Examiner

Scott Kastler

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 September 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 April 2004 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Burrow.

Burrow teaches a direct smelting plant with water cooled walls (14) including, components a-i of instant claim 1 recited in claim 1 of Burrow, the solids feed means of instant claims 2-10 disclosed at (27) of the drawings, and claims 11-13 of Burrow for example, the crane means of instant claims 18 and 19 disclosed at col. 5 lines 30-50 for example, and the tapping means of claims 20-25 disclosed at claims 6 and 14-17 of Burrow for example, thereby showing all aspects of the above claims except the use or specific placement of platforms or doors for allowing the plant to be accessible by operators, although Burrow does state, at col. 1 lines 63-65 for example that necessary access and handling facilities should be provided for operation of the plant, and also, at col. 5 lines 43-50 for example, that access doors for access to the interior of the vessel should be provided, although Burrow does not state where these platforms (access facilities) and doors should be placed in the plant. However, because the smelting plant of Burrow is arranged and operated in substantially the same manner as that of the instant claims, and would therefore require operators at substantially the same locations as in the instant claims, motivation to place the platforms and doors suggested by Burrow in the locations recited by the instant claims as required for efficient operation of the plant of the type disclosed by Burrow, would have been a modification obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 9/15/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's argument that Burrow is restricted to a circumferential operational arrangement while the instant claims are not and that Burrow does not disclose the placement of end metal and end slag tapping means located at a lower height than the slag and metal tapping means are not persuasive because claim 3 of Burrow for example, teaches a vertically lower tapping means (a slag draining means, which would also serve as a metal draining means) below the slag and metal tapping means, and the instant claims do not prohibit the use of a circumferential operational arrangement. Applicant's further argument that Burrow does not specifically recite the use of access means is not persuasive because as stated in the above rejection, Burrow recites that employment of access means where access is required is desirable.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

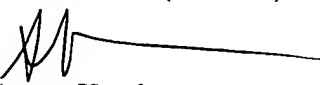
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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Kastler whose telephone number is (571) 272-1243. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Scott Kastler
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

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